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# JOHN BROWN IN CANADA.

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A MONOGRAPH.

BY

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FROM CANADIAN MAGAZINE, DEC., 1894.



Your friend  
John Brown

## JOHN BROWN IN CANADA.

BY JAMES CLELAND HAMILTON.

"A story worth telling, our annals afford."

—C. Mair.

"A moral warfare with the crime,  
And folly of an evil time."—Whittier.

A biography by one who was an eye-witness of some of the stormy scenes in the fifties, of the fierce conflict then waged between the pro-slavery and anti-slavery parties, brings to mind many matters of interest to residents on both sides of the Great Lakes. (a)

The author, Mr. Richard J. Hinton, was a trusted friend and adviser of Captain John Brown, and writes with the authority of personal knowledge. He shows also an enthusiasm for the holy cause, and a personal affection undiminished by the age that has passed since his hero gave up his brave life on the Charlestown gallows.

But this period has not sufficed for many of his contemporaries, whose personal feelings or fortunes were affected by the turmoil which followed, to form an unbiased judgment of the character and career of John Brown, the man of sad and stern furrowed countenance, whose word was Spartan law to those who best knew him, and whose arm was ever strong and ready to shelter the oppressed and to crush the oppressor.

Even in Canada, during the times

depicted by our author, some could have been found whose sympathies were more with Bomba and Maximilian, the representatives of reaction, than with Garibaldi, free Italy, and progressive Mexico. Some, too, there were among us, and perhaps still are, who regarded the period when the slave-masters ruled in Washington as the halcyon days of the Commonwealth.

Few admirers of John Brown will be found among such readers. He was an iconoclast, who spared no idols, however venerable, who respected no authority whose creed was oppression, and regarded no form of belief as sacred, if by it the mind of man was in any way confined.

The fastidious will find it hard to realize a pure-blooded Anglo-Saxon not only taking up the cause of the African with enthusiasm, out exhibiting no repul-

sion from his sooty skin, and treating the meanest slave as a brother. The descendant of the Mayflower Puritan who had fled across the sea for conscience's sake, himself embarks on an ocean of moral conflict, and is destined to be engulfed in its dark waves.

There is one class of our people who look on the career of Brown as, without doubt or gainsay, that of a true patriot and saviour. To their minds,—



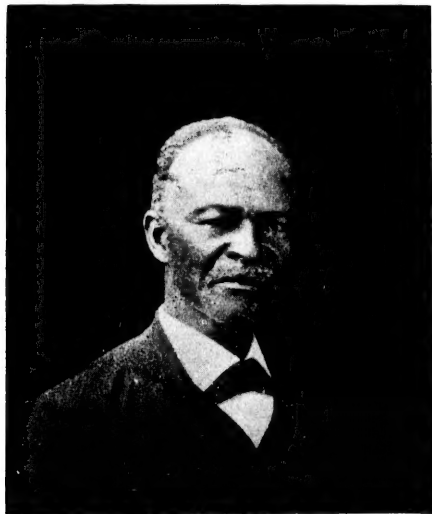
JOHN BROWN.

(a) John Brown and His Men. By Richard J. Hinton. Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1894, New York and Toronto.

"There sounds not to the trump of fame  
The echo of a nobler name."

Such, indeed, is the reverence and love of the African race for John Brown, hero of the Free Soil movement in Kansas, and leader of the Harper's Ferry raid.

They know that he fell a willing martyr to the cause of freedom, and how full of consequence that event was to the race he loved. It was the flash that fired the powder, the spark that kindled the blaze soon to light up all the land.



THE VERY REV. WALTER HAWKINS.

Superintendent (Bishop) of the B.A.E. Church.

*(From a photo given me by the late Bishop)*  
It will be my object now to show what part Canadians had in this matter. As far back as March 24th, 1846, in a letter written at Richmond, Ohio, John Brown says: "Jason and I have talked of a visit to Canada next fall. We would like to know more of that country." Soon after this, he removed to North Elba, Essex Co., New York, in the Adirondacks, in which beautiful and romantic region he made his home. Here he raised his favorite

Devon cattle and choice sheep, and aided colored people who came to settle on lands given them by Mr Gerrit Smith. His poetic spirit, love of nature, and benevolence, had full and happy scope for a time. His teachings and example were greatly prized by his poor neighbors, who required both encouragement and a spur to activity in free labor.

Wherever Brown's lot was cast, his earnest, manly character was conspicuous. His letters to members of his family showed fatherly affection most sincere, but abounded in lessons urging to duty. Writing to his son John, he says, "Say to Ruth, to be all that to-day which she intends to be to-morrow." His life was a living example of Carlyle's heroic words: "Not sport, but earnest, is what we should require. It is a most earnest thing to be alive in this world; to die is not sport for a man. Man's life never was a sport to him; it was a stern reality, altogether a serious matter to be alive." (a)

The colony grew under Brown's inspiring spirit and Gerrit Smith's benevolence. Among refugees who lived there for a time was Walter Hawkins, a bright young colored man, who had escaped from Maryland. In 1852, he removed to Canada, became honored and revered as a minister of the Gospel, and when he died in July, 1894, was Presiding Bishop of the British Methodist Episcopal Church.

But the attacks of pro-slavery men from Missouri upon "free-soil" settlers in Kansas, called Brown and his devoted sons to aid in defending the cause of freedom there. He stood firm, and grim as a great rock, on the disputed territory. The waves of violence swept around him, carrying the worst elements engendered by slavery, but broke baffled at his feet.

(a) From "Heroes and Hero Worship."

"Before the monstrous wrong he set him down,  
One man against a stone-walled city of sin."

He organized forces, obtained supplies, arms, and provisions from sympathisers in the Eastern States, and soon manfully, and with interest, avenged the attacks of the "Border Ruffians."

The slaves in Missouri were scattered on the plantations, prevented from meeting or consulting together, and kept as ignorant and illiterate as possible. All hope for betterment was suppressed by cruel punishment, or removal to the far south, of those who showed any manliness.

The Haytien proverb, "Zie blanc bouille negres," "The eyes of the whites burn up the negroes," was exemplified. The new territory of Kansas was fast filling with people, and elections were approaching which would decide whether the domain of slavery should be extended to it. That power never scrupled in the use of means to accomplish its ends. The Government of the United States, then in the hands of a temporizing president, and pro-slavery officials, failed to see fair play or to punish outrage. Brown determined to fight fire with fire. He found promises broken, conventions and compromises only made and used as a means to forward the pro-slavery movement. He could see little use in conferences. "Talk is a national institution, but it does no manner of good to the slave," he would say. Slaves were in his eyes prisoners of war; their masters, tyrants who had taken the sword and must perish by it. He took his Bible and the Declaration of American Independence as his guides. He fought in the spirit of Joshua and of Gideon, whose stories and characters had strong fascination for him.

In December, 1858, Brown entered Missouri with two small companies of brave men. His lieutenants, John Henry Kagi and Aaron D. Stevens, who were both with him afterwards at Harper's Ferry, commanded one,

and Brown the other. A negro called Jim had come and stated that he, with his wife and two children and another slave would be soon sold, and he begged for help. First these five slaves were liberated, then six other slaves, and two white men were marched off. The companions joined and moved slowly back to the territory, when the white men were released. In the raid, Kagi's party had been opposed by Mr. Cruise, a white man, who was shot down by Stevens in self-defence, as he claimed, while endeavoring to detain a man-chattel. This was unfortunate, but is to be regarded as an incident of the war, for such in fact, was the desultory conflict that then raged in the western outskirts of the Republic.

This invasion and bold attack on the "peculiar institution," in its home, raised a great commotion. Brown and Kagi were proclaimed outlaws, and prices were put on their heads. They determined to carry the freed people to Canada. The retreat was through Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Michigan, and was one of the boldest adventures of the campaign. After passing the village of Topeka with various incidents, shelter was found in an empty log cabin, where pursuers, headed by a United States marshal, overtook them.

They remained on the defensive until a band of young men from Topeka joined them. At Hilton, or Muddy Creek Crossing, the marshal stationed himself with eighty armed men. Brown had only twenty-three white men and three negroes. The women were sheltered in the cabins with emigrant waggons in front of them. The little company formed in double file. At the word, "Now go straight at 'em boys, they'll be sure to run," Brown and his party marched quickly towards the creek, but the foremost had not reached its margin, when the marshal rode off in hot haste, followed by such of his men as could untie and mount their horses in time. "The

scene was ridiculous beyond description," says one of the party. "Some horses were hastily mounted by two men; one man grabbed tight hold of the tail of a horse, trying to leap on from behind, while the rider was putting spurs into his sides, so he went flying through the air, his feet touching the ground now and then." Those of our comrades who had horses followed them about six miles, and brought back four prisoners and five horses.

The affray at Muddy Creek is known in the history of Kansas as "The Battle of the Spurs, as these instruments were the only weapons used. The reader will remember the more famous "Battle of the Spurs," of the year 1513, when the French fled, and some of their most noted men fell into the hands of the soldiers of Henry VIII. The prisoners were made to walk along beside their captors, Brown talking with them on the way concerning the wickedness of slavery. In the morning they were set at liberty, but their horses were confiscated, and given to the brave Topeka Boys.

As the contrabands advanced into strange territory their remarks showed their simple affectionate nature. One of the women pitied "poor massa! he's in a bad fix; hogs not killed, corn not shucked, and niggers all done gone." A man driving the oxen, asked the distance to Canada, and was told that it was fifteen hundred miles. "Oh, golly! we uns never get dar befo' spring," he exclaimed, shouting, as he brought the goad down, "Git up dar, buck; bung along!"

With many adventures, the party pressed on towards the North. One of the women gave birth to a child on the way, which was named John Brown. One of the prisoners, taken *en route*, was a gay young medical man, a rattling blade, whom Brown took under his especial care, and gave him, under compulsion, more moral and religious training than he had received for years. On his return home he told his story, and said Brown was

the best man he had ever met, and knew more about religion than any man.

The party reached Detroit on 12th March, 1859, and crossed over to Windsor in Canada. Here these people settled and lived industriously.

When the friend they loved so well suffered at Charlestown Court House a few months later, he had no mourners more sincere than these lowly ones of the earth whom he brought to Canadian manhood and freedom from Missourian bondage.

Samuel Harper, one of the band, lives now with his wife in a comfortable cottage on Bruce avenue in Windsor. He says that he and she are the only survivors of the party of eleven, except the boy called after John Brown, who, now a man of 35 years of age, lives at Detroit. Harper speaks very gratefully of Brown, saying, "I wish I was in a position to pay John Brown, Junior, one half what I owe his father, for what he did for us." He also speaks of the raid, and his old home, with the air of one who reviews the past and feels strongly. He said his "Boss" came after him to Windsor, and wanted him to go back, promising to treat him better than ever before. Harper was indignant, and replied: "I thought you was a smarter man dan dat, but I find you's a fool, come all dis way to ask me to go back to slavery."

He told his story as follows. The statement is as accurate as can be expected from one in the position of this freed man, after an age has passed. The person he referred to as Stevens was sometimes called Whipple. He followed Brown to Harper's Ferry, and figured there as Capt. Aaron D. Stevens. He was a man without fear. He was captured, as will be seen, after being wounded, and was tried and executed under Virginia law,

#### SAMUEL HARPER'S STORY.

"Way back een 1858, w'en Capt'in Brown kem down inter Missoureye," said Harpsr, "I was on'y 'bout 18 years ole, but my wife



ovah dar, she was 'bout 35. We kep' hearin' of de Capt'in takin' slaves away an' sendin' dem north, till fin'ly, 'bout Christmas, we he'ad dat de Capt'in was nigh to de fa'm we wuz workin'. So we done sent him wo'd dat we was awaitin' to be took away, an' a few weeks afterwa'ds the capt'in, with his partner Kagi, came at night wid a wagin, an' away we druv inter Kansas.

"But it was mighty slow trabelin'. You see dey was severil different parties 'mongst ouah band, an' ouah massers had people lookin' all ovah for us. We'd ride all night, and den maybe, we'd hev ter stay severil days in one house ter keep from gettin' cot. In a month we'd on'y got to a place near Topeka, which was 'bout forty miles from whar we started. Dey was 12 of us stoppin' at de house of a man named Doyle, besides de capt'in an' his men, w'en dere comes along a gang of slave huntahs. One of Capt'in Brown's men, Stevens, he went down to dem and sayed :— 'Gentlemen, you look 'sif you was lookin' fo' somebody o' somefin'. 'A'y, yas,' says de leader, 'we think ez how you hav some uv ouah slaves up yondeh een dat 'ere house.'

" 'S that so ?' says Stevens. 'Well, come on right along up wid me, an' you kin look hem ovah an' see '

"We wuz a watchin' this yere conversation all de time, an' w'en we see Stevens comin' up to de house wid dat 'ere man we jes' didn't know w'at to make of it. We began to git scared dat Stevens was goin' to give us up to dem slave huntahs. But de looks o' things changed w'en Stevens got up to de house. He jes' opened the do' long 'nough fer to grab a doubled-barreled gun. He pinte'd it at de slave huntah, an' says :

" 'Yo' want to see yo'r slaves, does yo' ? Well, jes' yo' look up dem barrels an' see ef yo' kin find 'em.'

"That man jes' went all to pieces. He drapped his gun, his legs was tremblin', an' de tears mos' sta'ted f'um hees eyes. Stevens took an' locked him up in de house. W'en de rest o' his crowd seen him capcha'ed, dey ran away 's fas' ez dey could go. Capt'in Brown went in to see de prisoner, an' says to him, 'I'll show you w'at it ees to look aftah slaves my man.' Thet frightened de prisoner awful. He was a kind old fellow, an' w'en he heerd w'at de capt'in said, I s'pose he thought he was goin' to be killed. He began to cry an' beg to be let go. De capt'in he only smiled a leetle bit, and talked some mo' to him, an' de next day he was let go.

"A few days afterwards, the United States Marshal came up, with another gang to capcha us. Dar was 'bout 75 of dem, an' dey surrounded de house, and we was all 'fraid we was goin' to be took for sure. But de capt'in he jes' said, 'Git ready, boys, an'

we'll w'ip 'em all.' Dar was on'y 14 of us altogether, but de capt'in was a terror to 'em, an' w'en we stepped out o' de house an' went for 'em de hull saiventy-five of 'em sta'ted runnin'. Capt'in Brown an' Kagi an' some others chased 'em, an' capcha'ed five prisoners. Dar was a doctah an' a lawyah amongst 'em. Dey all hed nice ho'es. De capt'in made 'em all get down. Den he told five of us slaves to mount de beasts an' we rode 'em w'ile de wite men hed to walk. It was early in de spring, an' de mud on de roads was away over dere ankles. I jes' tell you it was mighty tough walkin', an' you ken b'lieve dose fellers had enough of slave huntin'. De next day de capt'in let 'em all go.

"Ouah massers kep' spies watchin' till we crossed de border. W'en we got to Springdale, Iowa, a man came ter see Capt'in Brown, an' tole him dey wuz a lot of his fren's down in a town in Kansas dat wanted to see him. The capt'in said he did not care to go down, but ez soon 's the man started back, Capt'in Brown follered him. W'en he came back he said dar was a hull crowd comin' up to capcha us. We all went up to de school house an' got ourse'v's ready to fight.

"De crowd came an' hung aroun' de school 'ouse a few days, but dey didn't try to capcha us. De gov'nor of Kansas, he telegraphed to de United States Ma'shal at Springdale :— 'Capcha John Brown, daid or alive.' De Ma'shal, he ans'ed : 'Ef I try to capcha John Brown, it'll be daid, an' it'll be me dat'll be daid.' Fin'ly those Kansas people went home, an' den dat same Ma'shal put us in a carh an' sent us to Chicago.

"It took us over three months to get to Canada. If I'd knowed dat de slaves was a goin' to be freed so soon as dey was, I'd never a come to Windsor. W'y ? Cos I could a bought lan' down dar een Missouri-eye fo' 25 cents an acre, an' de climate is much bettah dan up heah.

"W'at kin' of a man was Capt'in Brown ? He was a great beeg man, ovah six feet tall, with great beeg shouldehs, and long hair, white ez snow. He was a vairy quiet man, awful quiet. He never even laughed. After we was freed, we was wild of cose, and we used to cut up all kinds ob foolishness. But de capt'in 'ud always look as solemn ez a graveya'd. Sometimes he jes' let out de tiniest bit of a smile, an' say : 'You'd bettah quit yo' foolin' an' take up your book.'

"De capt'in's son, John Brown, Jr., lives down to Put-in-Bay Island. He raises grapes down dere, an' we goes down to see him every summah. He hez a nice family, an' he's always glad to see hees ole frens."

How often Brown had been in Canada before this time does not appear

but his visits and correspondence with people of color, and others here, were frequent, and all with the one end in view.

As the time grew ripe, Chatham and St. Catharines were the places where the conspirators in the cause of freedom met to perfect their plans. In St. Catharines was then a wonderful woman, Harriet Tubman. She was a Maryland negress, who had escaped from slavery, went back from time to time, and brought away her old father and mother, her brother's wife and children, and many others, some of whom are still living in Canada. She gained the name "Deborah" and "Moses," for saving her people from bondage. In a conversation between Captain Brown and Wendell Phillips, in 1858, the former called her "the General of us all," and said she had led two thousand slaves from bondage to northern freedom. She is also referred to as "The woman" in letters of the period, written when it was deemed best not to mention true names of confederates. When the raid at the Ferry was made, she was residing at Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Southern people, who lost valuable chattels through her daring efforts, offered \$10,000 reward for her, dead or alive. Frederick Douglas, Gerrit Smith, and other friends, warned her of the danger she incurred, but she replied, "God will take care of me, whether in the North or in the South." She was of unmixed blood, and of very negrine features. She was a wise and faithful agent of the "Underground Railroad," and adviser of her people, till the war opened another field of usefulness, when she enlisted as an hospital or army nurse. This heroine lived at Auburn N.Y., subsequently, ~~but is since dead~~. The story of her life was published in a small volume. Mrs. Tubman was one of Brown's Canadian advisers and co-workers in the anti-slavery movement.

On the twelfth day of May, 1858, he wrote to his wife from Chatham,

the seat of law of the county of Kent: "Had a grand abolition Convention here, from different parts, on the 8th and 10th inst. Constitution slightly amended and adopted, and Society organized."

After the Convention, Brown wrote the letter to one of his sons given at end of this article, under name of James M. Bell.

The names of the members of the Chatham Convention were: *William Charles Monroe, G. J. Reynolds, J. C. Grant, A. J. Smith, James Monroe Jones, George B. Gill, M. F. Bailey, William Lambert, S. Hunton, John J. Jackson, Osborne P. Anderson, Alfred Whipper, C. W. Moffett, James M. Bell, W. H. Lehman, Alfred M. Ellsworth, John E. Cook, Steward Taylor, James W. Parnell, George Akin, Stephen Detin, Thomas Hickerson, John Cannel, Robinson Alexander, Richard Realf, Thomas F. Cury, Richard Richardson, Luke F. Parsons, Thos. M. Kennard, Jeremiah Anderson, J. H. Delaney, Robert Van Vauken, Thos. M. Stringer, Charles P. Tidd, John A. Thomas, C. Whipple, alias Aaron D. Stevens, J. D. Shadd, Robert Newman, Owen Brown, John Brown, J. H. Harris, Charles Smith, Simon Fislin, Isaac Holden, James Smith, and John H. Kagi*; the Secretary, *Dr. M. R. Delaney*, was a corresponding member. The members whose names are in italics were colored men.

The preliminary meeting was held in a frame cottage on Princess-street, south of King-street. This cottage was then known as the "King-street School," and is now a dwelling-house. Some meetings were also held in the First Baptist Church on the north side of King-street. Pretence was made in order to mislead the inquisitive, that the persons assembling were organizing a Masonic Lodge of colored people. But the most important proceedings took place in what was known as "No. 3 Engine House," a wooden building near McGregor's Creek, erected by Mr. Holden and



other colored men. The sketch of this is given by Mr. J. M. Jones from memory.

It is a remarkable coincidence that Brown laid his plans in this Chatham Fire Engine Hall, and was captured in another fire hall at Harper's Ferry.

The Convention met on the 8th of May, 1858, at 10 a.m. It had been convened by notes from John Brown to those whom he desired to attend. There was scant ceremony at the opening proceedings by these earnest men. They were of two colors, but of one mind, and all were equal in degree and station here. No civic address of welcome to the Canadian town, no beat of drum, or firing of guns, was heard. The place was rude and unadorned. Yet the object of the members of this little parliament was to gain freedom for four millions of slaves. Many of those here convening had already done, in self-sacrifice and in brave deeds, a fair share in the work. The result was destined to prove a factor of historical importance in the future of the American people.

The following is a copy of one of the invitations to attend:

CHATHAM, CANADA.  
May 5th, 1858.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have called a *quiet* Convention in this place of *true* friends of freedom. Your attendance is earnestly requested on the 10th inst. \* \* \*

Your friend,  
JOHN BROWN.

The motives causing Brown to choose this Canadian town as the place of meeting will be obvious when we regard the position. There were at this time, as Mr. Hinton estimates, seventy-five thousand colored people in Canada. This number was more than were really here: Upper Canada held 40,000; Toronto, 1,200. Some of these citizens were in good circumstances, and were free-born; many of them were intelligent, and watching with lively interest the state of affairs in the Republic, relating to their race.

Settlements of immigrant negroes had been for a score or more of years gradually growing in various parts of the Upper Province, among these being Amherstburg, Colchester, and Malden on the western extremity. The Queen's Bush in the townships of Peel and Wellesley was an important settlement, containing many well-to-do colored men. The cities of London, Hamilton, and St. Catharines, had their share. Dresden was an important centre, where Josiah Henson, best known as the "original Uncle Tom," held patriarchal sway, and had, with aid from England and New England, established the Dawn Institute, or Manual Labor School.

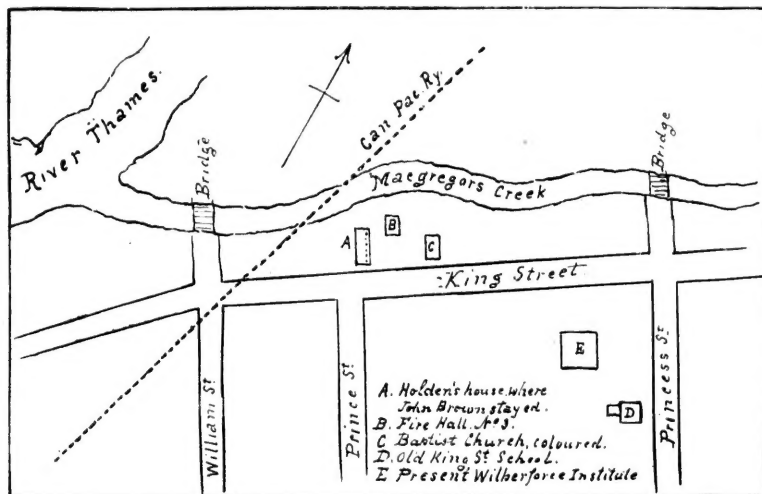
The Rev. William King had been laboring at Buxton, near the shore of Lake Erie, since 1848; had founded there, under the name of the Elgin Association, a model colony, where the poor fugitive came, weary and footsore, from his race for freedom, found shelter, and made himself a home.

Near this was Chatham, the chief town of the county of Kent, whose rich soil and moderate climate had attracted many dusky immigrants. Not a few of them had become well-to-do farmers. Others engaged in trade, or labored as mechanics. Their children were educated at the Wilberforce Institute, a graded school. In this county especially was the problem being worked out, as to the capacity of the African to take equal place with the Anglo-Saxon in the race of civilization. In addition to the educational facilities, the colored folk of Chatham had churches of their own, a newspaper, conducted in their interest by Mr. I. D. Shadd, an accomplished colored man, and societies for social intercourse and improvement, in which their affairs were discussed, mutual wants made known, and help provided. But there were also here and elsewhere, at each centre of colored population, meetings and discussions of a more earnest character: Conductors of the "Underground Railroad."

an organization whose influence in aid of the fleeing slaves, was felt from the lakes and St. Lawrence River to the centre of the slave populations, were often seen here. The "League of the Gileadites," as first formed by Brown in 1851, enlisted in its ranks many a courageous, freedom-loving man, and had some members in Western Canada. The name was taken from Judges vii. 3: "Whosoever is fearful or afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead." Members, when joining each band, agreed to provide suit-

and an engine manned by colored men. This town, bearing the name of England's great Prime Minister, was well chosen as the seat of the Convention.

The writer has obtained much of his information as to the events described in Canada, by inquiry from persons who were parties to them, or members of the Convention. To gain this was not a matter of course. The secrets which many of the old colored men had were often of vast importance to them in time of slavery.



SITE OF THE CHATHAM CONVENTION, 1858.

able implements (meaning weapons), and to aid all colored people in gaining freedom and resisting attack.

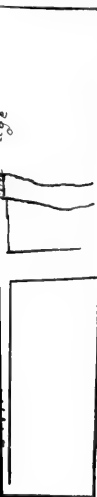
Such were some of the elements that then largely influenced the colored people here. They were fairly industrious, happy under British law, and, as Brown afterwards found, the greater portion of them were so occupied in seeking a livelihood and competence, that they hesitated or refused to risk many chances in a cause and struggle the result of which was dim and doubtful.

Not to be behind their white neighbors, they had a fire hall in Chatham.

They had escaped, sometimes with a struggle, and even bloodshed. Some had boldly gone back from their Canadian homes, and guided kinsmen or friends on the way to freedom. Of the acts of daring so done there was no open boasting. Secrecy was for years expedient, and so became habitual. A colored man of education and position acknowledged that he still met this feeling when making inquiries for the writer as to the Convention. "I find it very difficult," he writes, "to obtain any information from our people. We can not blame them much, because, in the

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course of two hundred and fifty years of intercourse with the Anglo-Saxon, they have not formed a very favorable opinion of him. When it comes to prying into the old-time secrets, they always think there is a cat in the meal, so you must make allowance and bear with them."

And now we return to the Convention. The leading spirit was John Brown, a man with well-set muscular form, of average size, his hair prematurely grey, closely trimmed and low on the forehead. His eyes bluish-grey, were, when he warmed in speech, full of fire. His face, with beard unshaven, and covering a strong, square mouth, with broad and prominent chin. His general appearance is thus described by Frederick Douglass and others. He was born on the 9th of May, 1800, of blue, New England blood, with descent from Peter Brown, who came in the Mayflower to Plymouth Rock in 1620; lived in Duxbury, near the hill where Miles Standish's house was built, and where his monument may now be seen. John Brown was of Calvinistic creed, and with a tendency to fatalism; with the taciturnity, wariness and contempt of danger of a Mohawk; an admirer of Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, Emerson and Sumner, apostles of Emancipation and opponents of Southern aggression. He was of great natural intelligence, and well read, especially in history, but not college-bred. He had travelled in Europe, and was interested in foreign affairs. He was full of affection to his family, and ever constant to his friends. But the cause of liberty had the foremost place in his heart and soul. Quoting from Cowper, he could say:

"'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower  
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,  
And we are weeds without it."

It was not of his own choice that he left his farm, and went into the bloody arena. One who met him before the Harper's Ferry affair, wrote: "Stranger than fiction have been his

escapes and exploits in Kansas. Combining the gentleness of a Christian, the love of a patriot, and the skill and boldness of a commander, whether ending his career in the quiet of home, or bloody strife, the freeman of Kansas will hallow his memory, and history will name him the Cromwell of our Border Wars.\*

He was of earnest and stern resolve, brave and true, Brown's sons inherited his Spartan spirit. With six of them, and a son-in-law, he had done a hero's part to save Kansas, and now he proposed to formulate bold plans for the future, before trusted adherents.

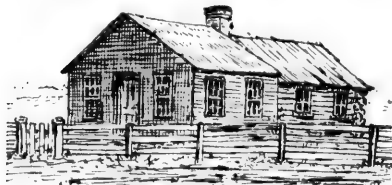
John Henry Kagi was a lawyer by profession, and full of zeal in the cause. He was his leader's right hand in Kansas and in the Convention. He aided in drawing the Constitution. He returned to the West, was in the raid in Missouri, and ended his life at Harper's Ferry. Capt. John E. Cook was from Indiana, well connected, and much trusted by Brown. He also fell in the final contest in Virginia. Owen Brown was the son of John Brown. Richard Realf was an English Chartist, of good literary ability. Reynolds was an active member of the Gileadite, or liberty League.

The Convention was called to order by Mr. Jackson, on whose motion the Rev. William C. Monroe, a colored minister from Detroit, was chosen President, and Capt. Kagi was elected Secretary. Mr. Brown then proceeded to state at length the object of the meeting, and the proposed plan of action, and presented a paper entitled "Provisional Constitution and Ordinances for the People of the United States." Before this, on motion by Mr. Kennard, seconded by Mr. Delaney, a parole of honor was taken by all the members, who each declared: "I solemnly affirm that I will not, in any way, divulge any of the secrets of this Convention, except to the persons entitled to know the

\*Redpath's Life of Brown, p. 225.

same, on the pain of forfeiting the respect and protection of this organization."

The plan unfolded sought no war of offence against the South, but to restore to the African race its natural rights, and to enable it to enforce and maintain them; not negro supremacy, but citizenship. There



Old King St. School.

was much discussion over the article finally adopted as No. XLVI., which was as follows: "The foregoing articles shall not be construed so as in any way to encourage the overthrow of any State Government, or the general Government of the United States, and look to no dissolution of the Union, but simply to amendment and repeal, and our flag shall be the same that our fathers fought for under the Revolution."

Article XLVIII. provided that every officer connected with the organization should make solemn oath to abide by the Constitution, and so with each citizen and soldier, before being enrolled.

Among the chief speakers were, John Brown, and Messrs. Delaney, Kagi, Kennard, Reynolds, Owen Brown, Realf and Jones. On motion of John Brown, a resolution was passed appointing himself, with J. H. Kagi, Richard Realf, I. T. Parsons, C. P. Tidd, C. Whipple, C. W. Moffat, John E. Cook, Owen Brown, Steward Taylor, Osborne P. Anderson, A. M. Ellsworth, Richard Richardson, W. H. Lehman, and John Lawrence, a committee to whom was delegated the power of the Convention to fill all offices named in the constitution which should become vacant. When the Har-

per's Ferry affair took place, Thomas F. Carey was chairman, and I. D. Shadd and M. F. Bailey were secretaries of this committee. The members of the Convention stayed about two weeks in Chatham. John Brown and Kagi visited other Canadian towns also, to see coloured men, and to interest them in the grand project.

Some months before the Convention, Mr. Brown visited Toronto and held meetings with them in Temperance Hall, and also met many at the house of the late Mr. Holland, a coloured man, on Queen-street west. On one occasion, Captain Brown remained as a guest with his friend Dr. A. M. Ross, who is distinguished as a naturalist, as well as an intrepid abolitionist, who risked his life on several occasions in excursions into the South to enable slaves to flee to Canada. Dr. Ross has been honored with titles and decorations from several European governments on account of his valuable contributions to science, but, above all these, he prizes the fact that he was the trusted friend of John Brown.

Dr. Ross speaks of the hero with the deepest love and admiration. He describes him as walking with noiseless tread, his eyes intent and watchful, and body bent somewhat forward, as if in search of an object: his speech well-guarded—all this the effect of the life of danger he had led with a reward offered for his head. But in the evening at the Doctor's house, reserve was thrown off, as he conversed with the few friends who were called in, and when the children's hour came, the grim warrior was all smiles, and the little ones gathered around him as he told them stories and made "shadow rabbits" on the wall, and then, kneeling on the carpet, helped them to build block-houses. Dr. Ross saw him on board the steamer bound for Niagara, on a Monday morning about the middle of May, when Brown bade him an affectionate adieu, took out a "York shilling," and

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handed it to him, saying, "Keep this, and whenever you see it, you'll remember John Brown." It is needless to say that the little silver piece is treasured by the Doctor as one of his most valued possessions.

Dr. Ross had known Brown intimately for three years previous to his death. "His manner and conversation," says the Doctor, "had a magnetic influence, which rendered him attractive, and stamped him as a man of more than ordinary coolness, tenacity of purpose, and devotion to what he considered right. He was, in my estimation, a Christian, in the full sense of that word. No idle, profane, or immodest word fell from his lips. He was deeply in earnest in the work, in which he believed himself a special instrument in the hands of God." He had for many years been studying the guerilla system of warfare, adopted in the mountainous portions of Spain and the Caucasus, and, in a ruder manner, by the Maroons of Jamaica, and by that system he thought he could, with a small body of picked men, inaugurate and maintain a negro insurrection in the mountains of Virginia, more successful than that of the Roman Spartacus, and cause so much annoyance to the United States Government, and dread in the minds of slaveholders, that they would ultimately be glad to "let the oppressed go free."

The Doctor also has the original of the remarkably prophetic lines which John Brown wrote, just before he was led out to die on the following day:

"CHARLESTOWN, VA.,

December, 2, 1859.

I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this *guilty land* will never be washed away except with much blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself, that without much bloodshed it might "be done."

JOHN BROWN.

Dr. Ross has a farewell letter, written to him by John Brown the day before his execution. It is as follows:

MY DEAR FRIEND—Captain Avis, my jailer, has just handed me your most kind and

affectionate letter. I am sorry your efforts to reach this place have been unavailing. I thank you for your faithfulness, and the assurance you give me that my poor and deeply afflicted family will be provided for. It takes from my mind the greatest cause of sadness I have experienced since my imprisonment. In a few hours I shall be in another and better state of existence. I feel quite cheerful, and ready to die. My dear friend, do not give up your labors for "the poor that cry, and them that are in bonds."

*Farewell Good bless you  
Your Friend  
John Brown*

Charleston Jail, Va., December 1st, 1859.

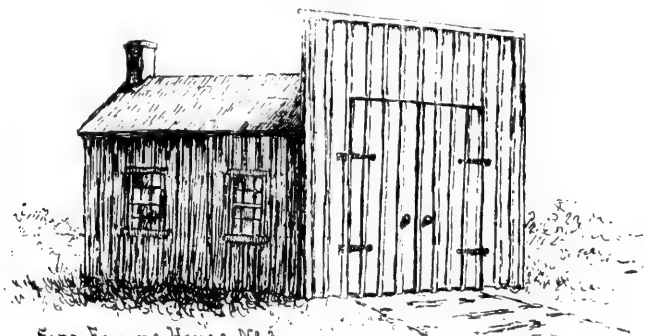
It may be well here to give a short account of Brown's three leading supporters at the Convention:—First came John Henry Kagi, of old Virginia stock, attractive in person, and of animated, even magnetic address. He had, our author states, just passed the seventh month of his twenty-fourth year, when slain at Harper's Ferry. "He had more the appearance of a divinity student than a warrior." His language was elegant, his deportment unassailable; his habits, strictly temperate; kind in his feelings to everyone, especially to children, whose confidence he acquired at first acquaintance. Mr. Hinton graphically recalls his friend as a man of personal beauty, with a fine, well-shaped head, a voice of gentle, sweet tones, that could be penetrating and cutting, too, almost to sharpness. The eyes large, full, well-set, hazel-grey in color, iridescent in light and effect. Mentally, he was the ablest of those who supported Brown in council, and followed him to Harper's Ferry. George B. Gill, who was associated with Kagi in the cause, said of him:—"In mental fields, he possessed abundant and ingenious resources. He was full of a wonderful vitality. His was a model disposition. No strain or stress could shake his unruffled serenity. His fertility of re-

sources made him a tower of strength to John Brown."

Next in importance to Captain Kagi was Captain John E. Cook, born in 1830, of Puritan ancestry, at Had-dam, Connecticut. He was thus described when in his cell, from whence he was taken to the gallows: "His long silken blonde hair curled carelessly about his neck; his deep blue eyes were gentle in expression as a woman's, and his slightly bronzed complexion did not conceal the soft effeminate skin that would have befitted the gentler sex. He was small in stature, nervous and impatient." Mr. Hinton, who knew him well, says, "Cook never lacked the courage which Napoleon termed the 'three o'clock in

from the millions who have but just cast aside the fetters and shackles that bound them. But ere that day arrives, I fear that we shall hear the crash, the battle shock, and see the red glare of the cannon's lightning. .... Inclosed, you will find a few flowers that I gathered in my rambles about town."

On the 3rd of July, 1859, he writes, "I shall start up among the mountains to gaze upon the grand and beautiful. .... God's blessed air sweeps over them, and the winds, as it were, breathe a mournful song of liberty.... Time passes slowly, as I idle thus. Heart and soul are all absorbed in the thought of what I owe my country and my God.... To-morrow is the



Fire Engine House, No. 5

the morning.' Cook formed the plan for capturing Lewis Washington, and obtaining his historical relics. He also advocated the seizure of Harper's Ferry, wanted to burn the buildings and railway bridges, carrying off such United States arms as their means of transport would allow." He went with Brown from Canada to Cleveland. Writing soon after the convention, he said: "The prospects of our cause are growing brighter and brighter. Through the dark gloom of the future I almost fancy I can see the dawning light of freedom breaking through the midnight darkness of wrong and oppression. I can almost hear the swelling anthem of liberty

Fourth! the glorious day which saw our Freedom's birth, but left sad hearts beneath the slave lash and clanking chain.... I feel self-condemned when I think of it. The contents of the cup may be *bitter*, but it is our duty; let us drain it to the very dregs."

On the 10th of August, he wrote in a like exalted strain, enclosing some stanzas, beginning:

"We see the gathering tempest in the sky,  
We see the black clouds as aloft they roll,  
We see from out the gloom the lightnings fly,  
O'erthrowing all who would their course control."

Aaron Dwight Stevens had been a subaltern in the United States army, when an officer unjustly treated a pri-

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vate, and was about to punish him  
cruelly. Stevens witnessing this, be-  
came indignant, knocked the officer  
down and deserted from Fort Leaven-  
worth. He changed his name to con-  
ceal his identity, and when with  
Brown, was known as Charles Whip-  
ple. He was a native of Connecticut.  
His great grandfather was a revolu-  
tionary officer, and his grandfather  
served in the war of 1812. He fought  
gallantly in the Mexican war, and  
afterwards helped to keep the Navajo  
and Apache Indians in check. When  
he deserted, he, for a time, concealed  
himself among the Delawares on the  
Kaw River, then joined the Free Soil  
men in Kansas under his assumed  
name. He stood six feet two inches  
in his stockings, and was well propor-  
tioned. His eye was restless and  
brilliant. His qualities were soldierly,  
and he would have won fame under  
happier auspices.

He was prone to hasty anger and  
passionate action, the "Simon Peter"  
of the party, and this sometimes called  
for rebuke from his leader, who, on  
the day of his death, wrote him as  
follows:

CHARLESTON PRISON, 2nd Dec., 1859.

JOHN BROWN TO AARON D. STEVENS,

"He that is slow to anger is better than  
the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than  
he that taketh a city."—*Solomon*.

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The hint, so singularly given, had  
the effect, perhaps, of aiding Stevens  
in curbing his temper during his te-  
dious trial and imprisonment. Unlike  
his leader, Stevens had not the Chris-  
tian faith to console him. "He died,"  
says Mr. Hinton, "a devoted Spiritu-  
alist, believing absolutely in the  
immortality of life." It would be en-  
croaching too much on the biographer,  
and would be beyond my present  
scope, were I to attempt more at length  
to depict the strong, sterling charac-  
ters, of both colors, drawn together by  
the wonderful magnetism of our hero.

Only one colored man of remark-  
able courage may be mentioned,

Shields Green, "with Congo face, big  
misplaced words and huge feet, knew  
instinctively what courageous man-  
hood meant," writes the narrator.  
When Frederick Douglass turned from  
Brown after his last interview, he met  
Green and told him he could go with  
him to Rochester. The black man  
glanced back at the figure of his leader,  
bowed under the pain of Douglass'  
refusal, and simply asked, "Is he  
going to stay?" "Yes," said Douglass,  
"Well I guess I goes wid de old man,"  
was the decision. When Brown was  
in the thick of the Harper's Ferry  
fight, Green came, under fire, with a  
message to Osborne Anderson and  
Hazlett at the arsenal, when Anderson  
told him he had better retreat with  
them. "You think der's no chance,  
Osborne?" he said. "Not one," was  
the reply. "And de old Captain  
can't get away?" "No," said both  
men. "Well, I guess I'll go back to  
de old man." And so he went into  
the very jaws of death, and finally  
died a brave martyr's death, at Char-  
lestown. Not last on the scroll of  
fame will be enrolled the name of  
this single-hearted freedman.

Some other members of the Chatham  
Convention, in addition to the Browns  
and his lieutenants just described,  
were from the United States, but  
many of them were then Canadian  
residents. John Brown was chosen  
Commander-in-Chief; J. H. Kagi,  
Secretary of War; Alfred W. Ells-  
worth and Osborne P. Anderson,  
Members of Congress; Owen Brown,  
Treasurer; George B. Gill, Secretary  
of the Treasurer; and Richard Realf,  
Secretary of State.

Mr. J. M. Jones, Mr. Isaac Holden,  
and Mr. Hunton, were, it is thought, the  
only members of the Convention sur-  
viving, until a late date, in Canada.  
They lived in Chatham, where Messrs.  
Hunton and Holden died recently.  
Mr. Holden was a merchant and  
surveyor, and Brown resided in his  
house during his visit. Mr. Jones is  
a skilled gunsmith and engraver, and

a Justice of the Peace for his county. He is a native of Raleigh, North Carolina, and was educated at Oberlin, Ohio, graduating in the class of 1849. Particulars of this historical event, stated by Mr. Jones mainly, but con-

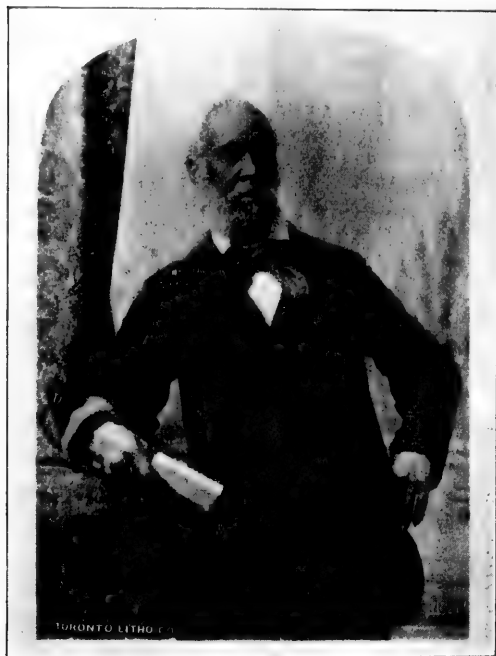
"Too many of them thought they carried their emblem on their backs. But Brown said the old flag was good enough for him; under it, freedom had been won from the tyrants of the old world, for white men; now he intended to make it do duty for black men. He declared emphatically that he would not give up the Stars and Stripes. That settled the question."

Some one proposed the admission of women as members, but Brown strenuously opposed this, and warned the members not to intimate, even to their wives, what was done.

During one of the sittings, Mr. Jones had the floor, and discussed the chances of the success or failure of the slaves rising to support the plan proposed. Mr. Brown's scheme was to fortify some place in the mountains, and call the slaves to rally under his colors. Jones expressed fear that he would be disappointed, because the slaves did not know enough to rally to his support. The American slaves, Jones argued, were different from those of

the West India island of San Domingo, whose successful uprising is matter of history, as they had there imbibed some of the impetuous character of their French masters, and were not so over-awed by white men. "Mr. Brown, no doubt thought," says Mr. Jones, "that I was making an impression on some of the members, if not on him, for he arose suddenly and remarked, 'Friend Jones, you will please say no more on that side. There will be plenty to defend that side of the question.' A general laugh took place.

"One day in my shop I told him



J. M. JONES.

firmed by Mr. Holden and Mr. Huntington, will be interesting. Most of these were committed by Mr. Jones to paper a few years after the Convention was held. "Mr. Brown," says Mr. Jones, "called almost daily at my gunshop, and spoke freely of the great subject that lay uppermost in his mind. He submitted his plans, and only asked for their approval by the Convention." One evening the question came up as to what flag should be used; our English colored subjects, who had been naturalized, said they would never think of fighting under the hated 'Stars and Stripes.'

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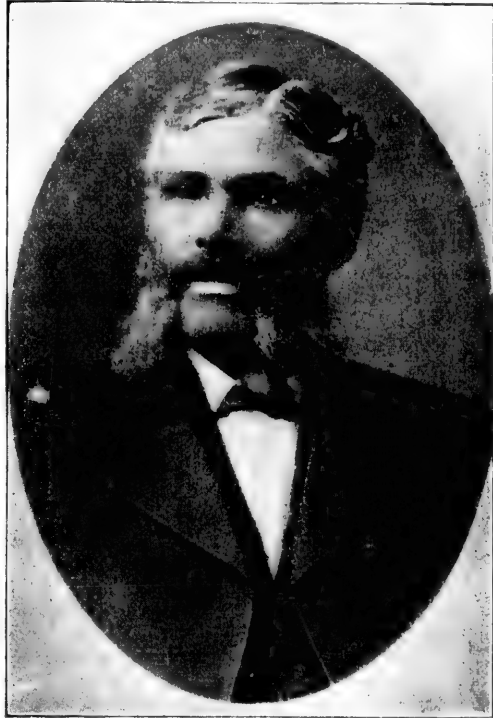
how utterly hopeless his plans would be if he persisted in making an attack with the few at his command, and that we could not afford to spare white men of his stamp, ready to sacrifice their lives for the salvation of black men. While I was speaking, Mr. Brown walked to and fro, with his hands behind his back, as was his custom when thinking on his favorite subject. He stopped suddenly, and bringing down his right hand with great force, exclaimed: 'Did not my Master Jesus Christ come down from Heaven and sacrifice Himself upon the altar for the salvation of the race, and should I, a worm, not worthy to crawl under his feet, refuse to sacrifice myself?' With a look of determination he resumed his walk.

"In all the conversations I had with him during his stay in Chatham of nearly a month, I never once saw a smile light up his countenance. He seemed to be always in deep and earnest thought.

"J. E. Cook worked with me a month, cleaning and repairing the revolvers and other arms belonging to the party. During this time he told me that while they were in Kansas fighting the Border Ruffians, Brown's son Frederick was killed. 'When we arrived,' said Cook, 'we found the young man lying dead on the road. He was going to a barn on his uncle's farm when he fell, riddled with bullets. The old man looked on his dead boy for a moment, then raising his eyes heavenward, said, 'By the Eternal, now they have done it, and from this forward they will pay for it.' This event had a fixed and lasting effect on Mr. Brown; and from this time

on I never saw a smile on his face.

"A question as to the time for making the attack came up in the Convention. Some advocated that we should wait until the United States became involved in war with some first-class power; that it would be next to madness to plunge into a strife for the abolition of slavery while the Government was at peace with other nations. Mr. Brown listened to the argument for some time, then slowly arose to his full height, and said: 'Mr. Chairman, I am no traitor; I would be the last one to take advantage of my



ISAAC HOLDEN.

country in the face of a foreign foe.' He seemed to regard it as a great insult. That settled the matter in my mind that John Brown was not insane.

"In his conversation during his stay here, he appeared intensely American. He never for a moment thought of fighting the United States, as such, but simply the defenders of slavery in the States. Only the ulcer, slavery, he would cut from the body politic.

"Mr. Brown called before the last meeting, and induced Mr. Jones, who had not attended all the sittings, to come to that, as the Constitution must be signed, and he wished his name to be on the roll of honor. As the paper was presented for signature, Brown said 'Now, friend Jones, give us John Hancock, bold and strong.' I replied that I thought it would resemble Stephen Hopkins. The reference was to the difference in the two signatures in the American Declaration of Independence—the one large and bold, the other that of a shaking hand.

"John Brown, never, I think," said Mr. Jones, "communicated his whole plan, even to his immediate followers. In his conversations with me he led me to think that he intended to sacrifice himself and a few of his followers for the purpose of arousing the people of the North from the stupor they were in on this subject. He seemed to think such sacrifice necessary to awaken the people from the deep sleep that had settled upon the minds of the whites of the North. He well knew that the sacrifice of any number of negroes would have no effect. What he intended to do, so far as I could gather from his conversation, from time to time, was to emulate Arnold Winkelried, the Swiss Chieftain, when he threw himself upon the Austrian spearsmen, crying, 'Make way for Liberty.' If that was his real object, the event that followed justified his design. He had said to another friend, 'It is nothing to die in a good cause, but an eternal disgrace to sit still in the presence of the barbarities of American Slavery.'

The plan of campaign, as promulgated at Chatham, was, to use the

mountains and swamps of Virginia as places into which slaves could be induced to escape, and there await the issue.

Kagi pointed out a chain of counties extending through South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, well fitted to receive and conceal refugees. With the aid of Canadian negroes, who were expected to join in large numbers, these places were to be fortified and manned. They would so become centres of moral force, and strategic points from which, in time, attacks could be made and reprisals secured.

The Constitution adopted was intended as a framework for organization. Brown had proposed to found several schools in which to train young men in military tactics, and especially in rifle practice. One of these was to be at Chatham, and Mr. C. Whipple (Stevens) was to be drill instructor. Mr. Brown did not over-estimate the state of education of the colored people. He knew that they would need leaders, and require training. His great hope was that the struggle would be supported by volunteers from Canada, educated and accustomed to self-government. He looked on our fugitives as picked men of sufficient intelligence, which, combined with a hatred to the South, would make them willing abettors of any enterprise destined to free their race.

There were some earnest abolitionists in Canada, who, while they admired his bravery and self-devotion, yet doubted the wisdom of his plan. Among these were the Hon. George Brown, of the *Toronto Globe*, who regarded his namesake as of too Quixotic a type, and the Rev. W. King, of Buxton, who was approached for his sanction, but declined to attend the Convention.

His influence would have been of weight with his colored friends and former pupils in obtaining recruits.

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ings at Chatham had been made known to the pro-slavery rulers at Washington. News of the massacre of the Marais des Cygnes was the cause of Brown's speedy return to Kansas, so that the plan which he had in contemplation in Canada, the attack on Harper's Ferry, and the inciting of the blacks in Virginia to rise, was laid aside till October, 1859. The raid into Missouri, the "battle of the spurs," and the carrying of the rescued slaves to Windsor, already described, took place meanwhile. Captain Brown, in time, laid aside his scheme of forming a place of refuge, and working out from it, and adopted the more daring plan of seizing the United States' arsenal at Harper's Ferry in Virginia: and so striking terror into the slave power by showing that its stronghold might be broken into, and assaults successfully made at its most ancient and central domain, as well as in outlying Missouri. Large supplies of guns, pikes and ammunition were purchased, and stealthily conveyed to the Kennedy farm, a short distance from the Ferry. This quiet place was rented for the purpose, and here Brown and his followers gathered. The sum of \$1,500 was furnished by Mr. George L. Stearns, of Boston, and spent in procuring supplies, and otherwise preparing for the contemplated attack. Papers showing exactly how this money was spent, and that it was used in the manner intended by the donors, are in the hands of Dr. Ross. Attacks on Brown's character have recently been made in regard to this fund by some who think it manly to bark at the dead lion. While such slanders cannot reach him, they are sorely felt by worthy members of Brown's family and personal friends still living, whose reverential love is unabated, and who know of a certainty that the old warrior's honor rests as unsullied as his courage is undisputed.

The cut of pike and gun given exactly represents those used at Harp-

er's Ferry, and is taken from weapons in Dr. Ross' possession.

On the tenth of October, 1859, Brown's plans for attack were complete. About this time, Dr. Ross received the following note:—

CHAMBERSBURG, PENN.,

Oct. 6th, 1859.

DEAR FRIEND—I shall move about the end of this month. Can you help the cause in the way promised. Address your reply to Isaac Smith, Chambersburg, Penn.

Your friend,

JOHN BROWN.

The town of Harper's Ferry is about fifty-three miles north-west from Washington, at the confluence of the Shenandoah with the Potomac. The Blue Ridge of the Alleghanies rises grandly on one side. The Baltimore and Ohio railway spans the Potomac here. It was the site of the United States armoury and arsenal, and witnessed various struggles during the late civil war. It was against this unsuspecting stronghold that the wild movement was to be made.

As organized, on paper, by Brown, his force was to be divided into four companies, each composed of seventy-two officers and men. Each company was to be subdivided into corporal-guards of seven men each, with their subaltern. Two such bands made a section of sixteen men, under a sergeant. While at the Kennedy farm, Brown and Kagi were visited by Frederick Douglass, who was informed of the intention of taking the Ferry and arsenal. He opposed it with all the arguments at his command, but found that Brown was not to be shaken from his purpose. "Our talk was long and earnest," said Douglass. "We spent the most of Saturday and a part of Sunday in this debate,—Brown for Harper's Ferry; and I against it; I for the policy of gradually drawing off the slaves to the mountains, as at first suggested and proposed by him." Brown was immovable and Mr. Douglass left, after a friendly parting, never to see the old hero again.

When the attack was made, only

twenty-two men had enlisted at the Kennedy farm, of whom Shields Green, Dangerfield Newby, John A. Cope-land, Osborne P. Anderson, W. H. Leary, and John Anderson, were colored men.

The affair of the 17th October, 1859, is now a matter of history. It relates that Brown with his little company, actually captured the Ferry and arsenal, and sent a thrill of fear through the whole south. In Virginia, the loss in the value of slaves, till then, but never since, a staple property, was estimated to be ten millions of dollars, and nearly a quarter of a million more was spent by the frightened authorities in quelling the *emeute* and providing safe-guards. Brown's two sons, Watson and Oliver, fell, fighting bravely. The leader himself, after a fearless attack and defence, fell into the hands of the State. Colonel, afterwards the famous General, Robert E. Lee, came with a regiment of soldiers, to avert the danger and guard the commonwealth. Wilkes Booth, who assassinated President Lincoln, was there in the ranks. Then followed, at Charlestown Court House, the trial of the leader, and of those who were taken with him; the conviction on the charge of treason, and the execution—from whose terrors our hero did not flinch.

Nowhere was the news received with more intense or sadder interest than in Chatham. From the day of the attack until the fatal 2nd of December following, meetings for prayer and consultation were held continuously. Earnest eulogiums upon the character of the departed hero were delivered on the evening of the day of his execution, by J. M. Bell, and J. H. Harris, who had been members of the Convention. The same issue of the *Provincial Freeman* that chronicles this tells of thirty-six persons who had been driven from Kentucky to Northern Territory, for the crime of sympathizing with the Charlestown sufferers.

They were the precursors of many whom the civil war was destined, within a few months, to drive to Canadian shelter, political refugees, such as General John C. Breckenridge, and Hon. Jacob Thompson, and "skedad-dlers," by the hundreds, as those were called, who thus escaped military enrolment. Many of these remained until the end of the war, and some are here still.

The interval in prison was cheerfully spent. To a friend he wrote, "I am quite cheerful. Men cannot imprison, or chain, or bind the soul. I go joyfully, in behalf of those millions that 'have no rights,' that this great and glorious—this Christian Republic 'is bound to respect.'"

Captain Brown's last act, before being led from prison, was to visit the cells of his fellow-captives and cheer them. He had imparted to these poor people much of his own brave spirit. He had a power to so influence those with him that they followed him with a reverential love, exceeding that of Ruth to Naomi, nor did any of them shrink from sacrifice; though Capt. Kagi and Brown's sons saw the great dangers, and had urged the hopelessness of moving before the ranks were filled.

It was not expected that the blow would be struck till the 24th of October. The precipitation of the attack, on the 17th, was caused by Brown's fear of betrayal by a Judas. The smallness of the band, and the fact that most of them had military titles, show that they were intended simply as the nucleus of the formidable force that Brown expected to join in the enterprise.

When he ascended the scaffold, on the 2nd of December, 1859, at Charlestown, it was with no faltering step. He stood erect and looked firmly down on the lines of soldiery that surrounded him. He met his end as one who had done his duty, as he saw it, and feared not that which was to come after. We can say of him, as of Sam-

son, "The dead which he slew at his death, were more than they which he slew in his life." Colonel Lee and Lieutenant J. E. B. Stuart, who looked on, and were soon gallantly fighting as generals for the South, did not then see that our hero conquered more than death; that the monster slavery then received a grievous wound which all their bravery could not avert or cure. Victor Hugo, in referring to this per-

treasure. He sleeps in the blessing of the slave."

Garibaldi, liberator of Italy, writing from his Caprera home, declared that "John Brown was the instrumental precursor of the liberty of the slave."

The engine hall to which Brown and some of his men retired, and where they were taken at last, was carried to the Chicago World's Exposition of 1893, and there seen by many thousands.

The fate of some only of those who were at the Chatham Convention is known. Martin R. Delaney, M. D., became a Major of the 104th regiment colored troops, and a Commissioner of the U. S. Bureau of Refugees, and in 1868 published an interesting biography of his life and times. Capt. Kagi fell in the *Shenandoah*, riddled with bullets. Capt. J. E. Cook, Cope-land, the young mulatto, and Chas. Whipple (Aaron D. Stevens), were taken prisoners at the Ferry, and were tried and executed at Charlestown. All of them died like the brave men they were, some days after their leader. Richard Realf agreed to be at the contest, but failed to be present, having gone to England. Osborne P. Anderson returned to Chatham after the

affray. He was proceeding to the scene of action with a load of pikes, thinking Brown held the arsenal. Discovering his mistake, and seeing marines approaching, he fled and escaped. Owen Brown also, foreseeing the result, escaped to the woods. He lived for some years afterwards in Ohio, then settled, with others of his father's family, at Pasadena, in California, where he recently died. He was a man of considerable ability and mental resources, and was brave and determined.

Dr. Ross had, at John Brown's request, gone to Richmond, and, being there at the time of the attack, was



DR. A. M. ROSS.

iod, wrote, "What the South slew last December, was not John Brown, but Slavery. . . . Slavery in all its forms will disappear."

Brown's body was carried to his loved home in the Adirondacks. Wendell Phillips made a eulogy at his grave. "John Brown," he said, "has loosened the roots of slavery. It may gasp, but it is dead. He said he could take the town with twenty men, and he did it. How sublime that last fortnight! His words are stronger than even his rifles. These crushed a State; those will yet crush Slavery. The echoes of his rifles have died away among the hills; his words, millions



arrested, but not long detained. As the day for his old friend's execution came on, he went to Harper's Ferry and applied for permission to go to Charlestown, but the officer in command ordered him to leave, and sent him under guard to Baltimore, calling to the captain in charge, "Captain, if he returns to Harper's Ferry, shoot him at once." The intrepid doctor then went to Governor Wise at Richmond, and, after an interview, related in his little volume, "Recollections and Experiences of an Abolitionist," the Governor refused him permission, and when he asked for a permit to leave the State, wrote on a card, "The bearer is hereby ordered to leave the State of Virginia within twenty-four hours, — Henry A. Wise." Dr. Ross, finding it impossible to see his old friend once more, wrote a farewell letter to John Brown, and received the answer already given.

Dr. Ross has ever since kept up an affectionate correspondence with the members of John Brown's family. From two letters received by him, we have been allowed to make extracts. The first is from his eldest daughter:

I know my dear father loved you, and it is but natural that his children should love you. For your devotion to father, and the interest you have shown in his children, my heart goes out gratefully.

RUTH BROWN THOMPSON.

Pasadena, California, Dec. 30th, 1892

The second is from his youngest daughter:

May the God that John Brown believed in and trusted bless you and yours, for your kindness to his sick and helpless daughters. This (the aid sent) will keep my children from going hungry.

ANNIE BROWN ADAMS.

Petrolia, California, Jan. 7th, 1893. (a)

(a) The Rev. O. R. Frothingham, in his life of Gerrit Smith, says: "Alexander M. Ross, of Canada, whose remarkable exploits in running off slaves, caused such consternation in the Southern States, was in communication with Gerrit Smith from first to last, was aided by him in his preparation with information and counsel, and had a close understanding with him in regard to his course of procedure. Both these men made the rescue of slaves a personal matter." To a very few of his New York and Philadelphia friends, Dr. Ross was known by his name, but the Quakers knew him as "The Helper," Emerson and his Boston associates as "The Canadian Knight." The colored people called him "Moses" and "The Helper." Other names were adopted as emergencies and safety required.

Two Canadians fell at Harper's Ferry. William H. Lehman, who had been the youngest member of the Chatham Convention, was shot and killed, after surrendering, by Shoppart, a militiaman. Steward Taylor was a fellow-countryman of Lehman's. Both were natives of the township of Markham, near Toronto, as Dr. Ross informs me, but Mr. Hinton gives Maine as the latter's birth-place, and his name as Leeman.

Richard Richardson was a Missouri slave, rescued by Brown. He is since dead. Some of the other members of the Convention are yet living in the United States. Since the decease of Messrs. Hutton and Holden, Mr. Jones is, as stated, the only survivor in Canada. They did not go to Virginia. Mr. Jones and Mr. Holden had then gone on a visit to the Pacific Coast. Mr. J. Madison Bell was a writer of ability, who lived for a time in St. Catharines and Chatham, and then settled in Toledo, Ohio. Ira D. Shadd and his brother Isaac, Chatham boys, removed to the South, and both of them became men of prominence. James H. Harris was a representative in Congress from North Carolina.

Some refer to the taking of Forts Moultrie and Castle Pinkney, or to the attack on Fort Sumter by the Confederacy, as the first blows of the late civil war. Others find in the Harper's Ferry affair, the initial outbreak, the bursting forth of the fire which had been long angrily smouldering on the south-western borders of the Commonwealth. Few will, in the light of history, deny that in the little school-house and engine hall of Chatham, the train was laid that fired the mine, whence resulted the overthrow of the proud Southern oligarchy.

The presiding genius of the Chatham Convention was the soul which soon after animated thousands of Union soldiers, as they fought for their country, and brought joy and freedom to the bondmen. When the

men moved on, under Grant and Sherman and Sheridan, the memory of the old hero's pious valor cheered their hearts, and roused to emulation of his bravery, as they marched, they sang :

John Brown died that the slave might be free ;  
John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave,  
But his soul is marching on."



JOHN BROWN'S PIKE AND GUN.

Copy of the letter from Brown, using name of Mr. Bell, after the Convention :

CHATHAM, CANADA WEST,  
May 21st, 1858.

DEAR SON AND OTHER FRIENDS ALL—The letters of three of your number are received, dated the 16th, by which we learn the difficulty you find in getting employment. It seems that all but three have managed to stop their board bills, and I do hope the balance will follow the *manlike* and *noble* example of patience and perseverance set them by the others, instead of being either discouraged or out of humor. The weather is so wet here that no work can be obtained. I have only received \$15 from the east, and such has been the effect of the course taken by F. (Col. Forbes), on our eastern friends, that I have some fears that we shall be compelled to delay further action for the present. They (his Eastern friends) urge us to do so, promising us liberal assistance after a while. I am in hourly expectation of help sufficient to pay off our board bills here, and to take us on to Cleveland, to see and advise with you, which we shall do at once when we get the means. Suppose we do have to defer our direct efforts, shall great and noble minds either indulge in useless complaint, or fold their arms in discouragement, or sit in idleness, when we may at least avoid losing ground. It is in times of difficulty that men show what they are ; it is in such times that men mark themselves. Are our difficulties such as to make us give up one of the noblest enterprises in which men ever were engaged?

Write JAMES M. BELL,  
Your Sincere Friend.

The following letter was received by the

author from Mr. John Brown, Jr., with a photograph of his father given :

PUT-IN-BAY, OTTAWA CO.,  
Ohio, Aug 4th.

J. C. HAMILTON, Esq.,  
Toronto, Canada.

DEAR SIR—Yours of the 6th July enclosing manuscript, came duly, but illness had prevented an earlier reply. Have read the articles you sent with deep interest, and most sincerely do I thank you for sending them.

Wish it were in my power to add anything which would give additional interest to your story of my father's career in Canada. The account you have given of it is ably written, and shows that true *apprehension* of his real character, which in my view gives great value to your paper.

The C. Whipple referred to (whose real name is Aaron D. Stevens), accompanied father and Kagi at the time the 12 slaves (Sam. Harper being one), were taken from Missouri through Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Michigan into Canada. He was at the convention you describe ; was at Harper's Ferry, and was subsequently executed at Charlestown, Va.

Father was only about five feet ten and one half inches in height, and not so broad-shouldered as many have represented him. His weight was about 150 lbs. ; he was muscular and active, and had uncommon endurance, physical and mental. The description of him, as without a beard, would apply to him only up to the last two or three years of his life, when he ceased to shave. His beard was white, his hair iron-grey. With your valuable paper, which I return to you by to-morrow's mail, I send you a photograph of my father, copied from a copy of the original which he gave to me at Andover, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, June 18th, 1859, when on his way to Harper's Ferry. This is an excellent picture, showing him with full beard as it was at the time of his execution, December 2nd, 1859.

Please accept, with the sincere regards of  
Faithfully yours,

JOHN BROWN, JR.

Authorities referred to :

The Public Life of John Brown. By James Redpath, 1860.

Life and Letters of John Brown, liberator of Kansas, and Martyr of Virginia. By F. B. Sanborn, 1885.

John Brown and His Men. By Richard J. Hinton, article in Frank Leslie's Monthly, June, 1880.

Book by same author, under same title. Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1894.

Original papers in possession of Dr. A. M. Ross, Toronto.

*The frontispiece attached is from a daguerotype taken by Cal. John Bowles in Kansas in Sept. 1856. The Chatham illustrations are from life.*